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STANDARDIZATION IN INDUSTRY

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STANDARDIZATION IN INDUSTRY

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SUMMARY

Development countries should through standardization be able to achieve, a means of passing more rapidly from the stage of craftsmen production and the uncoordinated importing of goods, to that of industrialisation, of the rationalization of agricultural products, and finally of the economy in general.

The first step toward standardization consists of the implementation of general and basic standards:
the terminology is of particular importance since the vocabulary of the development area under study does not as a rule include all the terms necessary for certain technical spheres;

in almost every industry, technical drawings constitute one of the most practical methods of expression. This method (of undeniable value to persons speaking the same language) becomes indispensable in international relations, because it is much more independent of the language than texts.

Finally, the units of measurement must be standardized, clearly defined, and easy to understand.

In a general way, standardization can in any country, usefully - and legitimately - become a gateway to what may be called general technical education.

The standardization of consumer goods represents a second stage in the work of standardization. It is applicable not only to machine-made articles for every day use, such as household utensils (pots and pans), small agricultural tools (saws, spades), small mechanical tools (hammers and pliers), but also to other industrial consumer goods such as furniture and textiles.

The standards of size and quality facilitate the free movement of supplies with a minimum of stock on hand and help avoid expenses entailed in the buying and storing of products which would not immediately be necessary for supplies.

As to articles of equipment, the problems facing the development areas are quite different, but standardization may be considered as necessary for these as it is for consumer goods.

The concept of equipment extends to the techniques of development, i.e. units, instruments and methods of measurement. For example, in irrigation, the ISO methods of measuring the flow of liquids would be used. The introduction of instruments

of measurement or tables of constants in non-metric units, into laboratories and quality control services of a country using the metric system, should be avoided.

Standardization is particularly concerned with the question of safety. The international unification of safety measures which the ISO is trying to achieve in cooperation with the BIT, will make it possible for the governments of the development areas to draw up their own safety requirements, based on these recommendations. The industrialized nations which have subscribed to these recommendations will comply with the proposed safety measures without difficulty.

With the beneficial effect of standardization in development countries thus established, the next point to be considered will be the practical problems raised by its implementation.

In all countries, it is generally accepted that the support of the government is necessary to the standardization bodies. This support must be solely financial (subsidies) and administrative (the granting, either de facto or de jure of a privileged recognition of the national standards). It is not really desirable, if during the meetings of the technical standardization committees, the inevitable differences that sometimes arise between the points of view of the producers and of the public or private consumers are settled by government decree rather than by experimentation and conciliation.

This is no less true in the development countries than in others - it seems to be a fact that, in these countries, the national standardization organizations encounter particularly great difficulties in holding their own and working effectively if the government does not vigorously support their efforts.

Technically, the problem of establishing standards adaptable to the technical and economic peculiarities of a development nation rarely poses insurmountable problems. An inventory must be made, then a summary of knowledge of the nation's specialists, the corresponding international standardization documents must be collected or in the absence of foreign standards, these data must in certain cases, be completed by consultation with international experts. A small team of engineers will generally suffice to complete this task.

The application of the standards raises more difficult problems. In the development countries the natural mechanics of application (law of supply and demand, competition by quality, reports of the study teams) are of less importance. Thus it would appear that the authority of the government will, on the whole, be particularly useful with respect to the effectiveness of the standards of the National Standards Institute.

The creation of a national brand of confirmity to standards can constitute an important feature of the combined measures for promoting and establishing the use of standards.

Standardization, so simple in principle, generally constitutes a significant achievement of industrial planning. For any country, it is a step forward on the road of development to have conceived and implemented national standardization. Therein lie all the elements of a good national publicity, which is likely to gain the support of the active elements in industry and government.

S - 318 E - Nov.1962 - 1,600